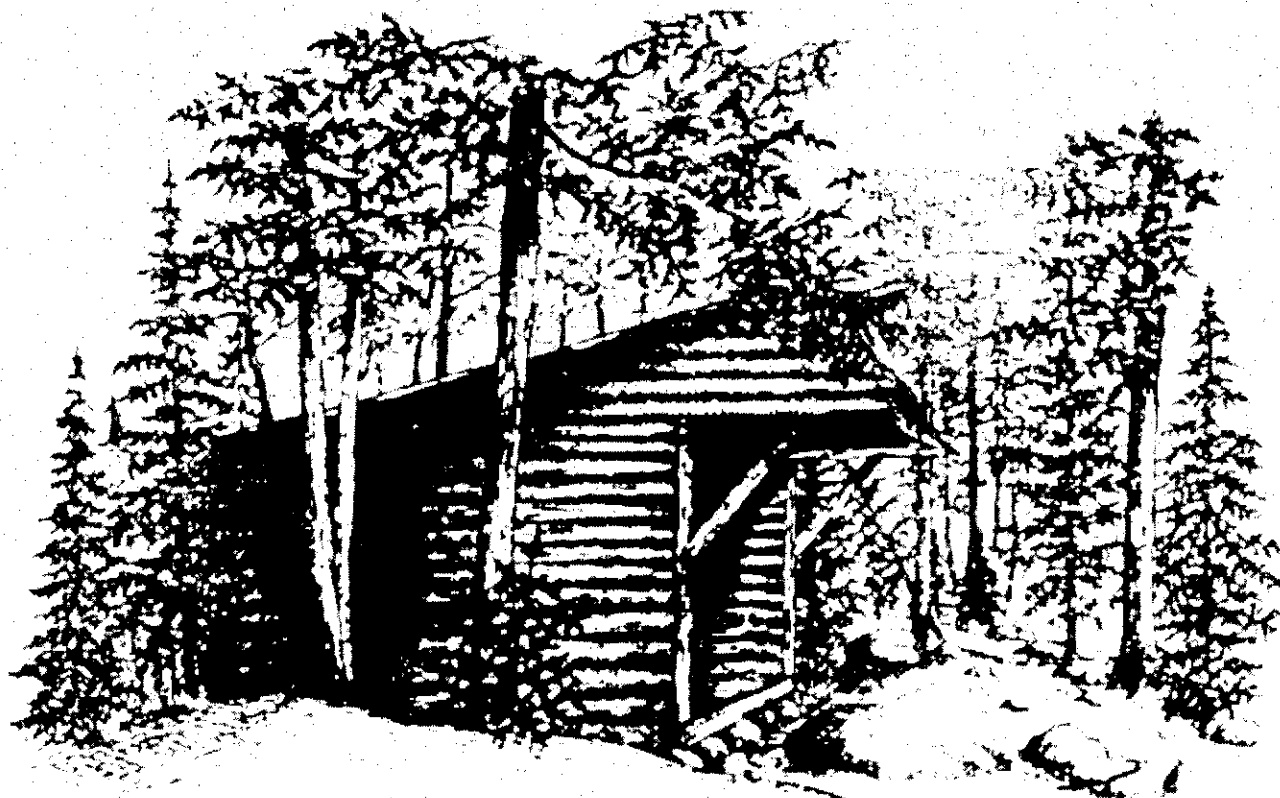




## CHAPTER 6

# SUPPORT STRUCTURES





Support structures provide for hiker convenience, comfort, or sanitation. They are not necessary for the completion of the trail itself. Structures should be built of quality material to provide longevity and should be designed to harmonize with the surrounding environment. If native material is used, the site from which it was obtained should be left as it was found, if at all possible. Figure 3 includes standards and explanations of some structures. Others are more fully explained in subsequent text.

**Figure 3: Ice Age National Scenic Trail Standards for Trail Support Facilities**

Standards (minimum)	ROS CLASS		
	Urban	Rural & Roaded Natural	Semiprimitive
<b>Primary Trailhead</b>	As needed	Spacing 5 miles or less when actual or desired use is high. Spacing 8-10 miles or more when actual use is low.	Spacing 10 miles or more.
<b>Campsite/Shelter</b>	Hotels, Bed and Breakfasts	Spacing 8-15 miles. Especially needed when dispersed camping along the route is not permissible.	Spacing 8-15 miles. Especially needed when dispersed camping along the route is not permissible.
<b>Developed Water</b>	Obtain from Public Facility	Spacing 10-15 miles when potable or treatable water is not available.	Spacing 20-30 miles when potable or treatable water is not available.
<b>Toilet Facility</b>	Obtain from public facility	At high-use areas, campsites, trailheads, and other public areas as necessary.	As needed for resource protection.
<b>Parking Lots</b> (composed of asphalt or gravel)	No less than 5 car spaces. (45'-50')	No less than 5 car spaces. (45'-50')	No less than 5 car spaces. (45'-50')

1) Primary trailheads provide parking for five or more vehicles and are generally located on well-traveled state, county and town roads. They have a bulletin board or kiosk for trail information and may provide water and toilets. They are frequently part of an existing recreation facility.

Secondary trailheads typically provide parking for less than five vehicles, or even no parking because of trail design or safety considerations. Kiosks with trail information are encouraged, but water and toilets are optional. Secondary trailheads may be used when it is necessary to gain access to the NST via other trails. In this situation, the secondary trailhead may be located where the named trail intersects the NST, or at the beginning of the access trail. Typically, secondary trailheads are located on low-traveled roads.



## **TRAILHEAD PARKING**

Parking areas should be located on public lands, when possible, and spaced to provide a suitable day-hiking experience. The distance between trailhead parking areas can vary considerably, depending upon the need and the ROS designation (See Figure 3). Typically, they are between 5 and 15 miles apart. Parking areas may also be connected to the main trail via access trails.

## **CAMPSITES OR SHELTERS**

In many areas, particularly federal, state, and county owned forests, dispersed camping may be allowed. Through the Chequamegon National Forest, Ice Age NST hikers may camp at any point along the trail as long as they stay 100 feet from all roads, trails, and surface water. Hikers should also practice minimum-impact camping techniques. In areas such as state parks, camping is restricted to designated campgrounds. When the trail crosses private land, camping of any kind is usually prohibited by the landowner. Private campgrounds are also found along the trail. The desired distance between camping areas is 8 to 15 miles.

Before a site is designated and developed for overnight facilities, the owner of the property, whether public or private, must be contacted to obtain permission. Sites should be selected carefully to withstand user impact. Development should be diverted from heavily eroded, delicate, or impacted sites. The choice between developing a campsite or a shelter is often based on local preference. Ideally, needed overnight facilities will eventually be acquired by the trail organization or public agency. Hikers should be directed to overnight sites by maps, guidebooks, and signs.

In selecting a location for a campsite or shelter, the following should be considered:

- ▶ Overnight facilities should be located no more than one day's hike apart (8 to 15 miles). Availability of good sites and access to water will influence actual site location.
- ▶ Sites should be as isolated as possible to reduce vandalism and other unauthorized uses.
- ▶ Low knolls or gradual slopes that allow water to drain away, and soils that are able to withstand impacts with little erosion are the best choice for an overnight facility. Low lying areas, where drainage may be poor, and areas subject to flooding caused by high water or beaver activity should be avoided.
- ▶ Attractive vegetation or topographic features that provide partial shade and shelter from high winds should be a consideration.
- ▶ A site that is partially exposed is desirable. Some exposure can provide an interesting view, allow for breezes to disperse mosquitoes, and perhaps catch the first rays of the morning sun. However, a campsite should not stand out or detract from a neighbor's view.
- ▶ Facilities should not be located in areas that present high safety risks, such as on a cliff, or in areas subject to flash flooding, rockfalls, lightning, or other natural hazards.
- ▶ Campsites or shelters should be located a reasonable distance from the main trail. They should not be located on the shorelines of lakes or other water bodies, and should not be readily visible from the water. A glimpse of the lake or water body from the campsite is ideal.



- ▶ Overnight facilities should not be visible from the main trail unless topography or ownership patterns dictate otherwise. Some agencies require the campsite to be even farther from the trail.
- ▶ The site should accommodate no more than 7 to 10 persons. One or two flat tent sites should be included or constructed.
- ▶ An adequate, year-round source of water for cooking and washing is desirable. While close proximity to water is a priority, hikers will accept sources up to ½ mile away. For sanitary purposes, it should be no closer than 150 feet from the actual campsite.
- ▶ Some type of privy should be provided. This should be located 100 to 200 feet downwind and at least 200 feet from the drinking water source and any surface water. It should also be located so that the land does not slope toward the drinking water source.
- ▶ A fire ring or fire pit may be provided, especially at heavily used sites where wood supply is abundant. This is preferable to several impromptu fire sites. A food hanging pole or "bear pole" should be located near the fire ring or any other area used for cooking.
- ▶ Trash receptacles should not be provided. All trash should be carried out or burned.

## **WATER**

Potable water is extremely important to backpackers. It can be obtained from domestic pump or pressurized water systems at developed camp and picnic grounds, administrative sites, roadside parks, or from filtered or chemically treated natural sources of water.

If an area does not have a clear, natural, or domestic water source available, one should be developed according to the schedule shown in Figure 3.